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Activities of the Department of Public Information: news services

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 70/93 A and B, provides a summary of the key advances made by the Department of Public Information from September 2015 to February 2016 in promoting the work of the United Nations to the global audience through its news services.

As part of its news services, which is one of three subprogrammes of the Department and implemented by its News and Media Division, the Department strengthens support for the United Nations by enhancing the quality, format and timeliness of information products on the Organization, and for increasing the geographic range and frequency of use of its products by media outlets and other users.

The activities under the other subprogrammes of the Department, namely strategic communications services and outreach and knowledge services, are described in separate reports of the Secretary-General (A/AC.198/2016/2 and A/AC.198/2016/4, respectively).

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolutions 70/93 A and B, the General Assembly took note of the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information submitted for consideration by the Committee on Information at its thirty-seventh session, and requested the Secretary-General to continue to report to the Committee on the activities of the Department.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly called upon the Department to provide specific information on a number of its activities. The Bureau of the Committee on Information advised the Department to present the requested information in three parts, in accordance with the three subprogrammes of the Department: strategic communications services, news services and outreach services.

3. The present report, which covers the news and media-related activities of the Department, highlights progress made in the area of radio, television, video, photography, print, Internet and social media. There is a particular focus in the report on the use of multilingualism on the Department's website and other news products.

4. Unless otherwise indicated, the report covers the activities of the Department for the period from September 2015 to February 2016.

II. News services

A. Overview

5. During the reporting period, the Department strived to consolidate and expand partnerships, as well as to enhance evaluation and reporting methods in order to have a clearer sense of the reach of its products and how integrated multilingual efforts were creating a broader impact across traditional and social media platforms. In introducing digital innovations, the Department sought, wherever possible, to use cutting-edge software and tools creatively, and to ensure that products could easily be shared, embedded and adapted into non-official languages by United Nations offices, including United Nations information centres, around the world.

6. In responding to emerging trends in news consumption, the Department is ensuring that its products are mobile-responsive, visual and readily adaptable to multiple social media uses, without sacrificing the use of traditional media and the needs of audiences still challenged by the digital divide. The Department built on earlier initiatives such as promoting a free news reader application and an audio application that offer access to United Nations content in all six official languages.

7. The Department's coordinated efforts on the summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change led to a record number of people around the world accessing information via its traditional and social media platforms. The summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, the papal visit and the observance of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations prompted a spike in the engagement of United Nations audiences around the world, from Governments, to ordinary citizens and to

journalists and educators seeking out and repurposing content. Efforts to engage audiences in the work and priorities of the United Nations were carried out through events marking the seventieth anniversary, which were covered prominently on all platforms. Images from these events were showcased in videos, photos, news stories and features, and shared globally through the United Nations website and on multiple social media platforms. The Audiovisual Services Section curated an exhibit showcasing photos of 70 years of the United Nations.

8. With a view to making news and information products resonate with multiple audiences, the Department is creating content targeted at various demographics and looking at how information is accessed differently. In addition, timely news coverage of major conflict zones highlighted what the United Nations system and Member States were striving to accomplish in the areas of peace and security and human rights in an integrated and informative way.

9. In response to the request made by the Committee on Information concerning the multiplying impact of broadcast partnerships on potential audiences, the Department continued to review its broadcast partnerships with the aim of understanding the current reach and usage of United Nations radio and television products. Owing to prohibitive costs, broadcasters themselves are often not able to provide audience data for their respective networks. In addition, when broadcasters do provide audience data, the methodologies used vary widely, making the information unreliable. In this context, the Department contacted individual partner broadcasters on a regular basis to determine audience impact. The Department found, for example, that from January to October 2015, visitors, including many broadcast partners, to the United Nations Radio websites in the six official languages and Portuguese and Kiswahili, downloaded products approximately 2 million times. The United Nations Radio websites also had more than 2.3 million page views. This is in addition to access via other means, including through social media.

10. As part of the observance of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, the News and Media Division reached nearly 10 million people by working with partners to place a series of its specially produced "Did you know" video messages highlighting facts about the work of the United Nations on the NASDAQ and Reuters screens in New York City's Times Square, as well as on screens in taxis, ferries and ferry terminals, and on screens in the City's four professional sports arenas. United Nations promotional posters were also placed in key international terminals at New York City's John F. Kennedy International Airport, in locations such as immigration, customs and baggage claim areas, where United Nations messages were seen by arriving visitors, targeted for the period preceding and during the Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and the general debate of the General Assembly.

B. United Nations Radio

11. United Nations Radio continued the search for new ways of reaching audiences across regions, seeking a balance between listeners who continue to rely on radio for news dissemination and those who are increasingly turning to handheld devices and online sources for obtaining news. United Nations Radio significantly strengthened its work in multilingual, multiplatform and multimedia productions,

stepping up the use of audio for social media across the six official languages, as well as Kiswahili and Portuguese. In addition, it continued to deliver weekly, topical adaptations of main broadcasts and stories in Bengali, Hindi and Urdu.

12. Throughout the reporting period, all language units provided extensive and comprehensive coverage of the major events and activities of the United Nations, most notably, the summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and the adoption of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals set by world leaders. The visit of the Pope to United Nations Headquarters in New York and the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations and the Conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention received extensive coverage, with dedicated web pages for each of these events, which included news reports, features, videos and photos, shared across multiple United Nations platforms.

13. United Nations Radio units covered all the major meetings and activities of United Nations bodies, agencies and senior officials, especially in connection with crises, including those in the Syrian Arab Republic, Burundi, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Yemen and Libya, offering an authoritative source of information to the public on United Nations activities in these areas.

14. United Nations Radio teams travelled with senior United Nations officials on their trips to the field, including accompanying the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict on her first visit to the Syrian Arab Republic and neighbouring countries, providing extensive coverage of the missions. As part of the Department's teams, radio reporters attended major United Nations conferences, including the Conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention, to provide first-hand coverage. United Nations Radio also worked with the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti on training workshops to enhance local capacity in the production of radio programmes.

15. United Nations Radio diversified the means and methods of disseminating its products to keep up with fast-paced technological developments in the field of communications, including by harnessing the power of social media in different regions. Over the course of the year, there has been an increased use of its products through Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Weibo (in China), VKontakte (in the Russian Federation) and SoundCloud, as reflected in the rising numbers of fans, followers, shares, retweets and views.

16. During the general debate of the General Assembly, the Chinese Unit conducted numerous live link-ups with China National Radio during prime time and received positive feedback from the listeners. A one-day collaboration project with China National Radio on 24 October for United Nations Day, together with the United Nations seventieth anniversary celebrations were hugely popular. Working with the United Nations Development Programme in China, the coverage of "Turning the Great Wall United Nations blue" was a major opportunity to highlight the work of the United Nations to the Chinese people in the anniversary year.

17. The Spanish Unit, in addition to providing coverage of all major events and activities, introduced innovative multimedia products such as story maps to illustrate their news pieces. One such initiative took place on World Refugee Day, where graphics and audio were interwoven in a creative way to enhance the listening experience. The Unit also worked on a special series on the sustainable development agenda including the new 17 Sustainable Development Goals. With the

implementation of new social media efforts, Spanish Radio saw a spike of interest during the high-level week of the General Assembly, with over 20,000 downloads from partner stations, individuals and organizations.

18. The Arabic Unit devoted extra coverage to key issues in the Middle East, including the situations in the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq, following the spread of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in the region, as well as the refugee and migrant crisis. One particular report, "The United Nations in Gaza raises mine awareness", had 7,536 plays. On Twitter, a story about the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia at the San Francisco conference commemorating the seventieth anniversary of the adoption of the Charter of the United Nations, garnered substantial interest, as did the story on the raising of the flag of the State of Palestine at United Nations Headquarters.

19. The Portuguese Unit established almost 20 new major partnerships to further disseminate its work, including with radio stations in Brazil, Mozambique and Portugal and with the Brazilian cable channel GNT, which has 47 million subscribers. The Unit conducted a series of exclusive interviews with a range of experts to explain what had been achieved in relation to the Millennium Development Goals and expectations about the Sustainable Development Goals, broadcasts that were targeted to all eight Portuguese-speaking nations. The Presidents or Heads of State of all eight Lusophone nations were also interviewed during the General Assembly. The Portuguese Unit increased its audience on social media, with Facebook followers increasing by 40 per cent in the course of the year. Meanwhile, on the Portuguese YouTube platform, the total number of views reached some 91,138 in December 2015, rising from 70,030 in December 2014.

20. The Russian Unit's coverage of the opening of the seventieth session of the General Assembly attracted higher numbers of listeners and followers on social media, with increases ranging from 22 per cent on VKontakte to a 71 per cent increase in the number of views for United Nations Radio's Russian YouTube account. Especially popular was the live tweeting of major speeches, and the behind-the-scenes photos and videos, which elicited thousands of views. Among the Unit's new partners is the popular news-oriented radio station, Vesti, in Ukraine and the Foundation for Independent Radio Broadcasting in the Russian Federation, which services hundreds of radio stations across the country. The Unit provided extensive coverage of events in Ukraine, focusing on the efforts of the United Nations to provide assistance to people in need. During the months of March and December 2015, the number of sessions reached an annual high of around 40,000.

21. The Kiswahili Unit continued to play an important role in reaching audiences in East Africa, by adapting and producing content on a wide range of sustainable development issues. Its social media presence increased substantially, from hundreds to now thousands of plays on SoundCloud. Increasingly, the team is exploring collaboration with blogs in the region, which largely welcome content on a wide range of United Nations issues.

22. The English Unit made significant strides with its programming, tailoring production to multimedia and social media formats. During the summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and the opening of the General Assembly, when behind-the-scenes videos and photos were featured, there was increased engagement with a 71 per cent rise in tweet impressions, mentions and followers. The unit also increased partnerships in countries from Kenya to New

Zealand and the United States of America. Programming now features a short daily news bulletin in addition to a longer bulletin, in an effort to adapt to the varying needs of clients.

23. The French Unit increased its programme outreach to areas of francophone Africa where conflict is rife, including through a new partnership with Radio Mikado-FM of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, and with Radio Guira-FM in the Central African Republic. The Unit also recorded increased page views and downloads through social media engagement. In October 2015, by stepping up the use of graphics and pictures, French Radio programmes registered 12,000 sessions (a term used for Internet metrics), 24,000 page views and 40,000 downloads across its social media platforms. Increasingly, the French Radio Unit and the United Nations News Centre teamed up to create informative videos and slideshows with the products being shared on multiple platforms, including by United Nations information centres.

C. United Nations Television

24. During the reporting period, the Department increased efforts to make video content available in the Organization's six official languages. Among the principal programmes, *United Nations in Action*, *United Nations Stories* and the *Year in Review* continue to be produced in the six official languages. The monthly feature magazine programme *21st Century* was disseminated to some 90 broadcasters globally. Also during this period, an Arabic version of the programme was produced in partnership with Turkish Radio and Television, adding to the existing Chinese and French language versions.

25. The United Nations Television Section maintained successful co-production partnerships with the United Nations Democracy Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Population Fund, UN-Women and many other departments, peacekeeping missions and United Nations programmes, funds and agencies. These partnerships increased the Section's ability to cover United Nations priority issues and themes through field trips to 17 countries around the world, including, among others, Brazil, China, India, Kenya, Myanmar, the Republic of Korea and the United States.

26. Notable achievements during the reporting period include a special edition of *21st Century*, in celebration of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations. Three segments, each representing one of the three pillars of the Organization — human rights, peace and security and development — highlighted pressing issues facing the world today through in-depth interviews with high-level United Nations representatives, edited with compelling footage from the field. One of these pieces focused on the explosion of the global refugee crisis and migration flows, making it a particularly topical product.

27. In January 2016, the Grammy Award-winning performer, Angelique Kidjo, took over as anchor of the French version of *21st Century*, "XXI^{e} *Siècle*", now entering its fourth year of production. The show, produced in partnership with France's TV5 Monde, which reaches 50 million households with a weekly average global audience of 55 million viewers, is expected to attract even greater audiences owing to Ms. Kidjo's star appeal, especially across Africa and the francophone world.

28. *United Nations in Action*, United Nations Television's long-running series, celebrated its 1,500th episode in December 2015. During the reporting period, a number of short features highlighting the Organization's seventieth anniversary were produced, including about how United Nations stamps are created.

29. In addition, several *United Nations in Action* features focused on the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Climate Change, the 20-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and other major United Nations events and were widely shared across United Nations platforms. In connection with the Conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention, for example, one piece featured the Secretary-General inaugurating a solar park in Gujarat, India, which was linked to the Global Solar Alliance, an initiative launched by India. The Section continues to work closely with other United Nations entities, sharing footage and repurposing existing audiovisual materials so as to maximize reach and viewership through both broadcast and social media dissemination.

30. The commemoration of the seventieth anniversary of the signing of the Charter of the United Nations in San Francisco, with the Secretary-General and other high-level officials and dignitaries in attendance, was covered by United Nations Television and shared with Member States via webcast. A five-minute video was also produced in the six official languages. In addition, a special video was created for celebrations of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, which premiered at the opening of the general debate of the seventieth session of the General Assembly. The video, entitled "Fanfare for all Peoples" featured an original, specially commissioned music score and unique aerial footage of the United Nations Headquarters premises filmed by unmanned aerial vehicles.

31. Among other videos overseen by the Television Section during the reporting period were a message by the Secretary-General to the peoples of Israel and the State of Palestine produced (in Arabic, English and Hebrew) to help defuse tensions in the region; a message to Comic-Con International highlighting United Nations "real life superheroes", and a short video in celebration of the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. In addition, United Nations Television produced the "I am 70" series, where people talked about their own seventieth birthday in the context of the Organization's seventieth anniversary and the role the United Nations had played in their lives. A video narrated by actor Michael Douglas for the celebration of the seventieth anniversary of the signing of the Charter in San Francisco and a video featuring the role of the Secretary-General on climate change were also produced.

32. The Television Section was awarded the first place in the human rights category and the Ron Kovic Peace Prize at the My Hero International Film Festival held in the United States, for its short film on the courageous action of a United Nations staff member who refused to allow 80 soldiers into a United Nations compound in South Sudan, saving many lives. The film was also used for the World Humanitarian Day and Rights Up Front initiative. Another short documentary, entitled "The path out of violence", focusing on the humanitarian and human rights crisis in the Central African Republic, was screened for World Humanitarian Day in Geneva. Two of the individuals in the film, the Catholic Archbishop of Bangui, Mgr. Dieudonné Nzapalainga, and the President of the Islamic Council in the

Central African Republic, Imam Oumar Kobine Layama, were given the Sergio Vieira de Mello award at a ceremony held at the United Nations Office at Geneva.

33. The availability of Civolution technology, whereby United Nations television products are digitally watermarked, has enabled the Department to track information on when and how products are used by some of the world's broadcasters. In the latter half of 2015, the feature magazine television series *21st Century* and *United Nations in Action* were downloaded and broadcast on a regular basis by PBS (United States), TRT (Turkey), Arirang (Republic of Korea), TV2 (Denmark), CNBC World (United States), Deutsche Welle (Germany), TV5 Monde (France) and several others.

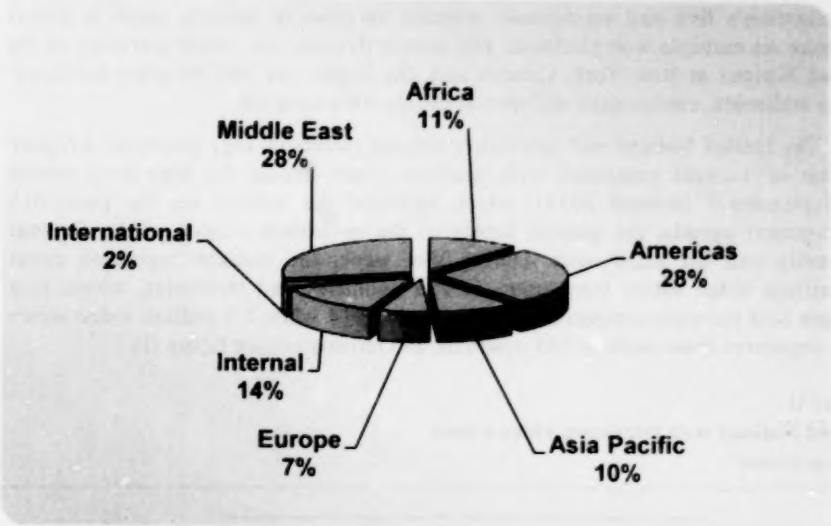
Live coverage

34. During the reporting period, United Nations Television provided gavel-to-gavel, broadcast-quality live feeds to broadcasters around the world of the meetings of the General Assembly, the Security Council and other intergovernmental bodies and major events, as well as press conferences and encounters at Headquarters in New York and at the United Nations Office at Geneva. International conferences sponsored by United Nations system organizations were also covered. The feeds of United Nations Television live coverage were made available through two major global service providers, Switch and Encompass, to worldwide television networks. United Nations Television coverage is also available through the United Nations Television channel on Time Warner Cable in New York and on YouTube. Coverage is also streamed live on Webcast. During the seventieth session of the General Assembly, United Nations Television covered 110 events, including the summit on the post-2015 development agenda and the address of His Holiness Pope Francis to the General Assembly, with simultaneous live feeds of events. United Nations Television also provided a live feed to broadcasters covering the General Assembly debate via the temporary media centre.

UNifeed

35. UNifeed continued to deliver video news stories with special coverage on weekends as needed through Associated Press Television to more than 1,000 broadcast points globally, with content from Headquarters and more than 47 partner agencies, funds and programmes, as well as peacekeeping missions. Select stories were also distributed by Reuters TV and the European Broadcasting Union. Reuters provides video news packages to more than 650 broadcasters with a potential reach of 1 billion viewers, and the European Broadcasting Union is a confederation of 85 broadcasting organizations from 56 countries and 37 associate broadcasters.

Figure I
UNifeed clients by region, January 2016



36. UNifeed also provided broadcast-quality videos on its website for smaller broadcasters, mostly in Africa, that are not subscribers to Associated Press Television or Reuters TV. Registered users include media professionals, government agencies, non-governmental organizations and educational institutions. On average, there were 2,662 downloads per month from broadcasters, an increase of 19 per cent from the previous year. Some of the downloaded UNifeed stories are redistributed further through registered users' online and social media platforms.

37. During the reporting period, UNifeed's coverage of stories on the Syrian Arab Republic and Syrian refugees, as well as coverage of the general debate of the General Assembly, including the summit on the post-2015 development agenda and the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Climate Change in Paris, received the most attention from broadcasters.

38. The Civolution (Teletrax) data tracking service has reported an average 5,303 monthly plays of UNifeed stories by broadcasters during the reporting period.

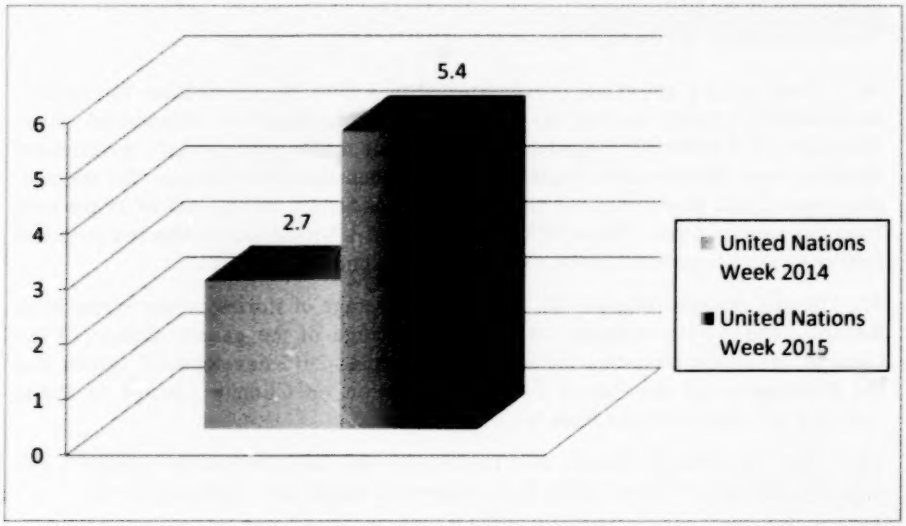
39. Top stories registered by Teletrax included the Secretary-General's visit to Svalbard, Norway, to raise awareness about climate change (1,443 hits); a story from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees about refugees in Europe (623 hits); the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations (379 hits); the signing of the South Sudan peace deal (302 hits); a story from the United Nations Children's Fund on Yemen child casualties (260 plays); and the Paris Agreement adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention (222 hits).

Webcasting

40. The Department continuously seeks ways to improve and expand the Organization's live and on-demand webcast services to directly reach a global audience on multiple web platforms and mobile devices. All major meetings of the United Nations at New York, Geneva and The Hague, as well as press briefings, media stakeouts, conferences and special events were covered.

41. The United Nations web television website (webtv.un.org) generated a higher number of viewers compared with previous years during the high-level period (25 September-3 October 2015), which included the summit on the post-2015 development agenda, the general debate of the seventieth session of the General Assembly and the papal visit. During that week, the website registered about 5.4 million video views from users in 225 countries and territories, which is a 100 per cent increase compared to UN week in 2014 when 2.7 million video views were registered from users in 215 countries and territories (see figure II).

Figure II
United Nations web television video views
(Millions of views)



42. The United Nations webcast vastly expanded its reach to global audiences by sharing the live embed codes for streaming in six official languages with many online media and other outlets. This enabled audiences to watch the live webcast coverage of these major events taking place at the United Nations in their preferred language directly from their local media's website. Media outlets that used the live embed codes ranged from the *New York Times*, to O Globo TV, to Vatican TV and several others.

43. In 2015, the number of views of the United Nations channel on YouTube (www.youtube.com/unitednations) exceeded 19.6 million, a 40 per cent increase from the previous year. The number of subscribers to the channel has grown to over 88,000 and a round-the-clock streaming channel was made available on YouTube.

The general debate of the General Assembly generated more than 40,000 comments from global users watching the live debate. To enhance site usability and user engagement, special playlists were created to facilitate access to information on particular issues. These were created for videos in different languages and users were encouraged to comment on them and to share their views.

D. Photos and audiovisual archives

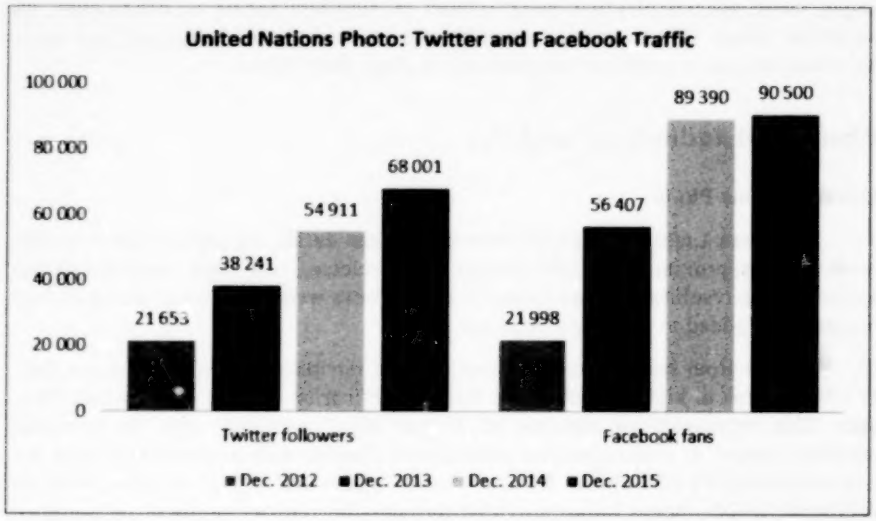
United Nations Photo

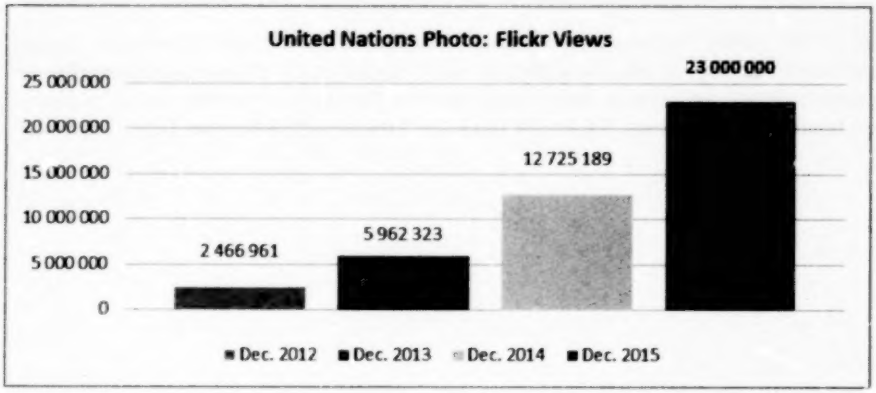
44. More than 1,600 assignments were undertaken during the period under review, resulting in approximately 5,000 images being selected and made available to the public in high resolution on the United Nations Photo website. In total, about 22,348 images were added to the photo database.

45. Visitors from more than 200 countries and territories downloaded more than 117,047 photos in high resolution for further publication and distribution and other uses. This represents an increase of 32 per cent compared with the previous reporting period, as clients became increasingly familiar with downloading from the United Nations Photo website. Manual service is also still in high demand, with an additional 7,900 images being provided through file transfer protocol or e-mailed upon request to permanent missions to the United Nations and members of the public.

46. The United Nations Photo website registered more than 2.8 million unique page views during the reporting period and its social media channels continued to be a popular place for users to find United Nations Photo content, with increases across the board in Flickr views, Facebook likes and Twitter followers (see figure III).

Figure III
United Nations Photo content on social media platforms





Audiovisual archives and library services

47. During the reporting period, the Audiovisual Library played a central role in providing access to and long-term preservation of the Organization's audiovisual archives. The Department continued to look for donors and to raise awareness of the urgent need to digitize seven decades of material for long-term preservation, access and sustainable management.

48. In the past year, two Member States responded to the Department's proposal for funding to digitize and preserve archived audio and visual materials. The Government of Oman made a voluntary contribution of $4.5 million to a trust fund for the digitization of United Nations audiovisual archives. This ongoing project will allow the Department to digitize selected historical audio, films and videos, making them accessible to the global public and preserving them for future generations. The Office of the Prime Minister of Japan, in coordination with the United Nations information centre in Tokyo, Japan, sponsored a project which

allowed the Department to digitize some 200 historic films and videos on the work of Japan in its 60 years at the United Nations. The digital collection is now fully accessible through the United Nations Audiovisual Library website and through the Office of the Prime Minister of Japan. The Department will continue its efforts to seek creative partnerships and the technical expertise necessary for the sustainable management of the Organization's audiovisual archives.

49. The Department continued to use the media asset management system as a primary source of video and audio recordings for the production of its news and media stories. The system also archives all United Nations digital audio and video official recordings, including the related metadata necessary for effective search and discovery.

50. The Audiovisual Library has created and migrated approximately 2,700 metadata records into the media asset management system. Some 11,000 files, including recently digitized legacy analog files, have been entered into the system, allowing easy access and dissemination, and 160,000 audio and video files have been viewed and/or downloaded by clients worldwide.

51. The Department has also refined and expanded the automatic distribution system for high-resolution video and audio-on-demand in more efficient processes. The system now includes UNifeed stories and television features and will soon also be used for other media assets produced by the Department. Today, all content in the media asset management system may be effectively distributed on demand to a worldwide audience in any of the available languages. The Department continued its partnership with the Archives and Records Management Section, the Broadcast and Conference Support Section and the Office of Information and Communications Technology of the Department of Management to address the requirements for long-term preservation and accessibility of these audiovisual records. The Department has a crucial role in providing expert advice in these areas, as well as on the establishment of a secure backup system with full disaster recovery and business continuity for the media asset management system, to protect and preserve contents stored on that platform by the Department (images, audio and metadata). A technical working group with representatives of all stakeholders is working to establish, test, implement and refine standard operating procedures and policies to improve the system.

52. The revamped Audiovisual Library website platform launched last year continued to be improved and refined to include new features and services for Member States, professional media and institutional clients. The website platform offers current and selected historic audio, film and video recordings from a wide range of media from the United Nations audiovisual collection. High-resolution content is delivered on demand and includes content in all six official languages, depending on availability.

E. United Nations News Centre

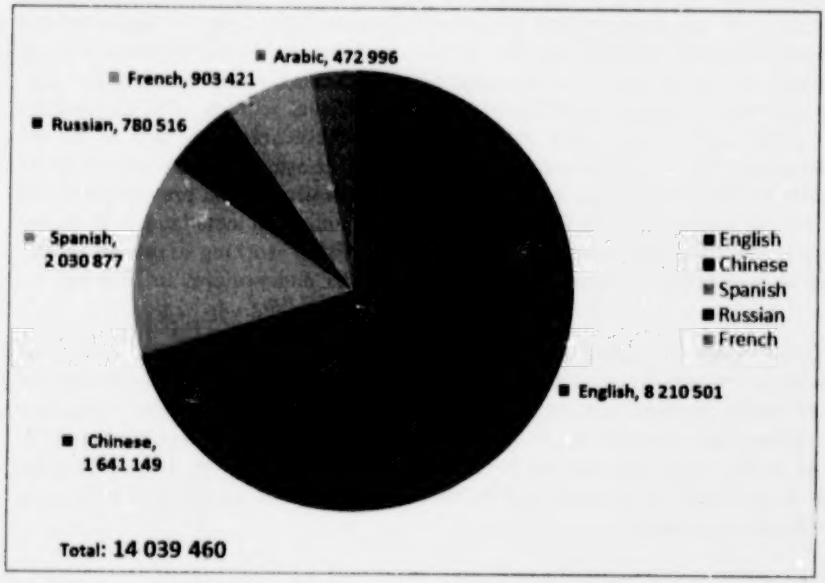
53. The multilingual United Nations News Centre portal provided timely, accurate and balanced news coverage of the latest developments in the United Nations system in all six official languages. In doing so, it coordinated with the relevant substantive offices, including the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the

Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Political Affairs, and showcased the work of United Nations agencies and programmes to provide an integrated picture of efforts made around the world.

54. Over the reporting period, the United Nations News Centres, in the six official languages, received more than 13.8 million page views, averaging about 1.2 million views per month. Visitors to the News Centres, in all languages, totalled over 5.4 million for the year, equalling approximately 450,000 per month. The most-read English news story for the year, on the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, garnered over 39,500 page views from the time of its publication on 25 September 2015 through the end of the year. Meanwhile, on a monthly basis the most popular stories each brought in from 15,000 to 24,000 page views during the month of their publication alone, including a story on the Security Council resolution to eradicate ISIL safe havens, and one on the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals.

55. There was continued growth on social media platforms, with Twitter followers for the News Centre (English) surpassing the milestone of 200,000, while News Centre English Facebook followers edged up to 390,000. On stories such as Burundi, where the United Nations is seen as an authoritative and exclusive source of information, news stories routinely garnered over 4 million potential impressions.

Figure IV
United Nations News Centre page views by language, 2015



56. Building on the popularity of the "Newsmaker" series of interviews, the English language News Centre created an updated, revamped look and a new name to highlight its keynote interviews with senior officials. Other multimedia productions included a special series linked to the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations called "United Nations art and gifts", showcasing historic gifts to the Organization

from Member States over the past seven decades, and the "Character sketches" series based on the writings of United Nations veteran staff member Sir Brian Urquhart.

57. In an effort to present the news in a more engaging way, the News Services Section has increased the use of multimedia storytelling. For example, at the Conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention in Paris, a story written about how the Conference attempted to be carbon neutral included a video featuring an on-site baker who eliminated the need to transport baked goods to conference participants. Almost all feature stories involve a multimedia element, whether videos, photos or both. Content is also shared with colleagues in radio and on social media to further amplify the message and achieve greater audience impact.

58. The issue of climate change was featured heavily by the News Centre in all six official languages, throughout the reporting period, culminating with extensive and in-depth coverage of Conference of the Parties. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the seventieth session of the General Assembly and stories on refugees, migrants and the conflicts in the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen, Burundi, the Sudan and the Central African Republic were among the many issues featured prominently on the News Centres website.

59. In addition, the News Centres provided coverage from United Nations conferences away from Headquarters featuring numerous interviews, feature stories and video clips, which included the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Qatar (April 2015) and the Climate Change Conference in Paris (December 2015). Coverage away from Headquarters was provided in addition to the daily coverage of meetings and events taking place at Headquarters.

60. The United Nations News Centre has become the major source of information on United Nations activities. The media in some regions, including major news agencies, online publications, newspapers and television and radio stations, widely redistribute and quote News Centre stories.

F. Press releases

61. As a key part of its news-related services, the Department's Meetings Coverage Section provided fast, accurate and comprehensive coverage of all open intergovernmental meetings and selected press conferences at Headquarters and other locations. Between July and December 2015, the Section produced a total of 2,229 press releases, with 10,586 pages in English and French. This output comprised meetings coverage summaries (708), other press releases (1,297) and summaries and transcripts of briefings and press conferences (224).

62. Coverage was made available in hard copy at Headquarters and distributed to worldwide audiences online and through the United Nations information centres, and included:

(a) A total of 428 press releases relating to the main session of the General Assembly, including plenary meetings and meetings of the Main Committees, from mid-September to December 2015;

(b) A total of 419 press releases covering the Security Council, including ministerial-level meetings on settlement of conflicts in the Middle East and North

Africa and countering the terrorist threat in the region; countering the financing of terrorism and violent extremism; and women and peace and security. Coverage also included substantive debates on Afghanistan, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, Yemen, the Middle East, children and armed conflict, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, peace and security in Africa, the international criminal tribunals and the protection of civilians, as well as Security Council press statements;

(c) At least 38 press releases on the Economic and Social Council, including coverage of its substantive session held at United Nations Headquarters in 2015;

(d) A total of 1,104 other press releases, including statements, remarks and messages from the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General, as well as materials from other United Nations offices and departments.

III. Other services

Services to the media: media accreditation and liaison

63. During the general debate of the seventieth session of the General Assembly, the summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and the papal visit, the Department provided services to a record number of approximately 5,000 journalists. In addition to the regular, long-term accredited journalists, about 4,000 new media passes were issued just for the high-level events. Besides coordinating coverage of meetings, the Department facilitated 160 photo opportunities of the Secretary-General and various dignitaries, and provided support to 105 stakeouts, press conferences and events at United Nations Headquarters. The Department worked closely with the Holy See to plan for and ensure smooth media access and coverage of the papal visit.

64. From October to December 2015, the Department's Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit provided accreditation to 800 media representatives and continued to assist the press with coverage of United Nations activities. It continued to disseminate information about United Nations events and official documents through its daily media alert, the Media Documents Centre and its Twitter account, which has close to 33,000 followers, a 20 per cent increase year-on-year.

IV. United Nations website

65. The Department has continued to increase and improve the volume of website content on the United Nations website (un.org) in all six official languages. Not only has this advanced language parity, but it has also increased the volume of content available with the new United Nations digital brand, which was released in March 2015.

66. The United Nations website has been significantly rebranded and expanded with new sections that provide full and detailed coverage of the Charter; the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; an interactive history of the United Nations; the United Nations and the Nobel Peace Prize; a new and improved site index; upgraded landing pages covering documents, conferences and events; answers to frequently asked questions and a contact form; a series of pages

describing United Nations issues in depth; and an integrated landing page on the principal kinds of video content the United Nations produces. In addition, efforts to achieve language parity on the website for the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa have continued with new sections created in Arabic, Chinese and Russian.

67. Web-based coverage of United Nations observances has increased with the development of new multilingual websites for the following: Human Rights Day (10 December); International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime (9 December); World Soil Day (5 December); World Youth Skills Day (15 July); International Day of Yoga (21 June); and International Albinism Awareness Day (13 June).

68. The Department further assisted a wide variety of partner United Nations offices and departments by redeveloping their websites using the new digital brand and web content management technologies (such as WordPress and Drupal). Examples include new websites for the Department of Political Affairs; the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace; the Rule of Law Unit (part of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General); the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (part of the Department of Political Affairs); the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre; the Security Council subsidiary organs; the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism; and the Economic and Social Council.

69. United Nations milestone events for 2015 were reflected in the work of the Web Services Section, which launched a special section on the United Nations website to cover sustainable development (http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/) dedicated to coverage of the Sustainable Development Goals. During the period of the summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, the new look of the United Nations home page was temporarily redesigned as a special edition showcasing the Sustainable Development Goals. As the seventieth anniversary approached, work on the website to celebrate the anniversary (www.un.org/un70) was significantly increased and provided detailed coverage of a wide variety of related media and events, such as the *Turn the World Blue* campaign. Likewise, coverage of the Conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention in Paris was covered in all six official languages and updated on a daily basis.

70. During the general debate of the seventieth session of the General Assembly, video, audio and document coverage was provided by the Web Services Section using a dedicated website (http://gadebate.un.org). In addition, a completely new website for the President of the General Assembly, in all six official languages, was launched. This site featured a new blogging section allowing staff members of the Office of the President of the General Assembly to update the site directly from a smart phone.

71. The Department continues to explore new and innovative ways of using websites to attract visitors and raise awareness of the United Nations through digital channels. Some examples of these include "Character sketches", a new microsite containing interviews (http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocus/charactersketches.asp); an "In focus" microsite for migration issues (http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocus/migration.asp); a feature containing notable quotes from speakers in the general debate called "Heard at the United Nations" (http://www.un.org/en/news-event/ga-quotes/); and "In case you missed it", which highlights memorable stories and media from the previous two weeks (http://www.un.org/en/ICYMI/).

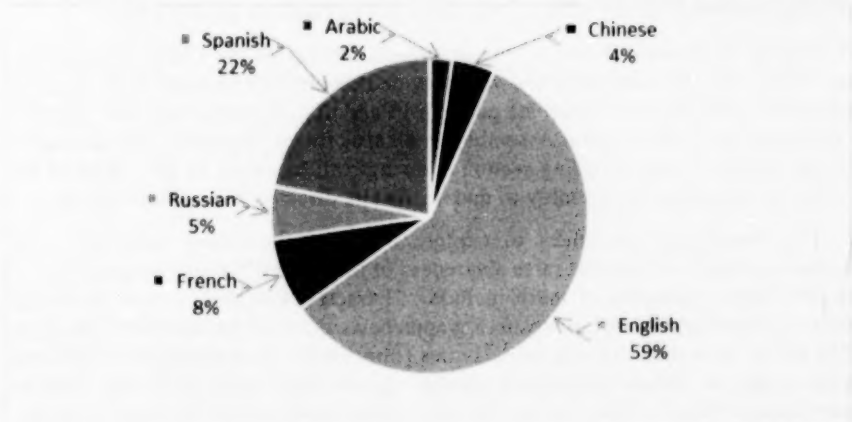
72. The Department has been active in advocating and enforcing website governance in the United Nations, with a focus on multilingualism, accessibility and the digital brand. A new website on web accessibility was launched, which raises awareness of the subject and offers concrete tools and guidelines to make sites more accessible (http://www.un.org/webaccessibility/). Samples of website templates that are fully accessible have been developed for free distribution within the United Nations, and the Department's work on this topic has been raised through its participation in the Interdepartmental Task Force on Accessibility (convened by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs), iSeek articles and a dedicated video in the style of a public service announcement underscoring the importance of website accessibility.

73. Under its mandate of website governance, the Web Services Section ensures that any website that wishes to use the un.org domain name is fully reviewed for multilingualism and accessibility. Information concerning use of the United Nations website by language is given in the table and figure V below.

United Nations website traffic by language, 1 January-30 November 2015

Language	*Session*	*Users*	*Pageviews*	*Pages per session*
Arabic	1 398 989	982 885	3 260 793	2.33
Chinese	2 528 177	2 026 255	6 108 217	2.42
English	32 801 109	20 150 488	81 638 613	2.49
French	4 445 233	2 997 985	10 520 664	2.37
Russian	3 458 547	2 265 345	7 567 445	2.19
Spanish	15 313 839	11 114 816	30 627 513	2.00
Total	**59 945 894**	**39 537 774**	**139 723 245**	**2.30**

Figure V
United Nations website page views by language, 1 January-30 November 2015



V. Multilingualism

74. Social media reach has improved at a steady rate in all official languages. The United Nations Arabic social media platforms experienced new highs in terms of engagement during the General Assembly's high-level week. The Arabic Twitter account gained 11,200 new followers, 2 million tweet impressions and 3,500 retweets. This is attributed to much richer content being posted on the Arabic channels, such as data visualizations, infographics, banners, posters and images.

75. By delivering real-time quotes of leaders' statements along with direct links to the official Arabic texts and videos of leaders' speeches (when available), the United Nations Arabic Facebook account received 100,000 new likes and a record of 3,073,205 viewers was reached.

76. For Chinese, the number of United Nations Weibo followers has reached 7.47 million. The followers of WeChat and Renmin microblogs reached a total of 519,092, an increase of 8 per cent compared with 2014. In 2015, the Department's Web Services Section's Chinese Unit produced and uploaded about 280 short videos to the video application accounts Meipai, Miaopai and Weishi, which have been viewed over 330 million times. The total number of the subscribers to these three accounts has reached 8.7 million.

77. During the General Assembly, the Web Services Section Chinese Unit published 105 articles on WeChat, which yielded a total reach of 28.8 million. The number of short posts published about United Nations Day in October 2015 was 63, with a total reach of 32.7 million.

78. French social media activities included regular updates to YouTube, Twitter and Facebook. The United Nations French Facebook account has seen its fan base increase to 200,000 as at November 2015 from 178,000 in December 2014.

79. The social media accounts in Russian have continued to attract large numbers of Russian-speaking audiences around the world, demonstrating solid growth rates of 30 to 60 per cent per year. The United Nations YouTube account in Russian has been especially successful and experienced a 400 per cent growth in terms of video views over the course of 2015.

80. Concerning Spanish social media, the United Nations Spanish YouTube channel surpassed one million views, reaching 1.5 million views, a 125 per cent increase with respect to the previous year. Twitter surpassed half a million followers, a 54 per cent increase with respect to the previous year.

VI. Conclusion

81. The Department has undertaken several activities that examine industry trends and how newsrooms and intergovernmental organizations are adapting to the radical changes in global news consumption habits and patterns. While traditional media continues to be used widely in many parts of the world, increasingly, the trend towards using handheld and mobile devices, and reliance on digital and social media, is dramatically reshaping who has access to news and how they obtain information about international events and the work of the United Nations. The Department will work to adapt its products to meet this new reality.

82. The Department is continuing its efforts to train its news and content producers in multimedia techniques and to improve content management optimization. As the demands on the Department to meet new media needs increase, it will seek to adapt by organizing capacity around languages to allow for creative solutions.

83. Preserving the invaluable audiovisual archives of the Organization is also of high importance to the Department, which, through voluntary contributions, will make advances in its efforts towards the digitization of the majority of the United Nations collection in the most cost-effective way that ensures their access to future generations. This process is already under way.

84. To ensure the continued quality and quantity of programmes and to strengthen multilingualism, the Department will explore the improvement of the coordination and workflow among languages. The General Assembly decided not to approve the resources to expand the multilingual capacity of the Department contained in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (resolution 70/247). While the Department will continue to make efforts to increase its multilingual output within existing resources, the decision has an impact on its capacity to undertake activities in additional languages.